

- 2 -

a plurality of apertures, the cross-sectional area of said apertures in said panel members varying between said panel members, said apertures of said panel members being located further away from said backwash water inlet having a lesser cross-sectional area relative to said cross sectional area of said apertures of said panel members closer to said backwash water inlet.

Amend claims 6 and 7 as follows:

6. [Twice amended] A filter underdrain assembly as in claim 3 wherein said air passageway extends below said upper surface of said panel member, said air passageway being formed from interconnected surfaces defining sides and a bottom, said sides having perforations to allow air to escape from said air passageway below said upper surface of said panel member.

7. [Twice amended] A filter underdrain assembly as in claim 3 wherein said air passageway extends below said upper surface of said panel member, said air passageway being formed from interconnected surfaces defining sides and a bottom, said air passageway having perforations extending through said upper surface of said panel member.

Amend claim 18 as follows:

18. [Twice amended] Filter underdrain apparatus for controlling backwash water flow maldistribution from a backwash water inlet, said filter underdrain apparatus comprising a plurality of panel members assembled adjacent each other to form a grid like underdrain, each panel member having multiple punched apertures in a surface thereof, each aperture defining a pair of water inlet/outlets and wherein the number and/or size of said punched apertures are varied from panel member to panel member, said panel members furthest away from said backwash water inlet having a lesser number of apertures or smaller slotted inlet/outlets from said panel members nearer to said backwash water inlet, said panel members being operable to provide a

- 3 -

substantially equalised water flow through the underdrain assembly from said panel members.

Amend claim 19 as follows:

19. Apparatus according to claim 18 wherein said multiple punched apertures are sized to substantially prevent the passage of filter media therethrough.

Amend claim 20 as follows:

20. Apparatus according to claim 19 and further comprising an attachment for attaching each of said panel members to adjacent panel members for securing said panel member to said underdrain assembly.

Amend claim 21 as follows:

21. Apparatus according to claim 20 and further comprising a seal for forming a substantially watertight seal between a surface of each of said panel members and said underdrain.

Amend claim 26 as follows:

26. [Twice amended] Filter underdrain assembly for controlling backwash water flow from a backwash water inlet, said filter underdrain assembly comprising a plurality of panel members forming a grid like underdrain, each panel member having a plurality of apertures, the number or cross-sectional area of said apertures varying between said panel members, said panel members located further away from said backwash water inlet having a lesser number of apertures or smaller cross-sectional area of said apertures relative to those of said panel members located closer to said backwash water inlet, said panel members being operable to substantially equalize water flow from each of said panel members of said filter underdrain assembly.